

REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action mailed April 27, 2007, which has been reviewed and carefully considered. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the amendments made above and the remarks to follow are respectfully requested.

By means of the present amendment, the current Abstract has been deleted and substituted with the enclosed New Abstract which better conforms to U.S. practice.

By means of the present amendment, claims 1-2 and 6-10 have been amended for better conformance to U.S. practice, such as beginning the dependent claims with 'The' instead of 'A', and deleting reference numerals typically used in European practice that are known to not limit the scope of the claims. Claims 1-2 and 6-10 were not amended in order to address issues of patentability and Applicants respectfully reserve all rights under the Doctrine of Equivalents.

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that the information disclosure statement (IDS) filed March 24, 2003 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2) for not supplying a copy of WO

01/99312 which was not initialed by the Examiner on Form PTO/SB/08A filed with the IDS on January 6, 2006. In response a legible copy of WO 01/99312 is enclosed. Accordingly, consideration of WO 01/99312 is respectfully requested.

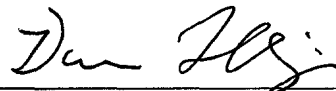
In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that claim 5 contains allowable subject matter. By means of the present amendment, claims 3-5 have been canceled without prejudice, and independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended to include the features of allowable claim 5. In addition, new independent claim 11 also includes the features of allowable claim 5. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that independent claims 1, 8 and 11 be allowed. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2, 6-7, 9-10 and 12-15 should also be allowed at least based on their dependence from independent claims 1, 8 and 11 as well as their individually patentable elements.

In addition, Applicants deny any statement, position or averment of the Examiner that is not specifically addressed by the foregoing argument and response. Any rejections and/or points of

argument not addressed would appear to be moot in view of the presented remarks. However, the Applicants reserve the right to submit further arguments in support of the above stated position, should that become necessary. No arguments are waived and none of the Examiner's statements are conceded.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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July 17, 2007

Enclosure: New Abstract
WO 01/99312

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